

The Potential for Normal Political Relations between the United States and Iran Following Presidential Elections in Each Country

**A Monograph
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Abstract

THE POTENTIAL FOR NORMAL POLITICAL RELATIONS BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND IRAN FOLLOWING PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS IN EACH COUNTRY by
CAPT Scott B. Jerabek, USN, 58 pages.

With Presidential elections in both the United States and Iran occurring within eight months of each other, one can suspect major changes in the political environment. This environment is not just the relationship between the U.S. and Iran, but the entire world, and more specifically the Middle East. With one new President and another possible new President in Iran, the impacts could be dramatic. The author believes that the political landscape will change, however, the unilateral relationship between the United States and Iran will not change substantially.

The basic factors examined are limited, but the assumptions would be the same if the base were expanded. The major efforts are put into the history of the relationship between the United States and Iran. This history points out that despite the various stages there was once a congenial relationship. The historical review depicts that both countries have had both positive and negative events that influenced the relationships. This fact in itself would lead to believe that if it was so once, it could be possible again.

The use of terrorism throughout the world has created a new paradigm for political processes and expectations by state and non-state actors. Terrorism is not a political recognized bargaining tool, but many countries are now expending millions if not billions of dollars attempting to defeat it. These efforts are wide-ranging and influence relationships across the globe. More specifically, terrorism has negative impacts in almost all countries. The use of terrorism by a state actors, or countries that expect respect is a limiting factor in this world of instant information. Terrorism is a limiting factor when trying to establish relationships, however, non-state actors can negatively influence these attempted relationship-building efforts.

Nuclear weapons play a critical role in the political process. The ability to produce and delivery reliable nuclear weapons is a major bargaining chip. The full history and implications must be understood by all. Not just understood by the countries attempting to form relationships, but all countries that could be impacted by the use or threat us use of nuclear weapons.

The likelihood of the United States and Iran forming a normal relationship are limited. The assumptions made and built upon throughout the paper are base on historical factors. There are many different assumptions that could be made, but maintaining a historical, fact-based argument can only lead to one logical assumption.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
HISTORICAL IMPACTS	7
Power and Policy	7
Maslow?	9
The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly	11
The Nail in the Coffin	14
CURRENT POLITICS AND CULTURE	17
D.I.M.E.	18
Elections	21
Terrorism	26
NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION	31
The History of Nuclear Weapons	34
Can Iran?	36
How can Iran?	39
Would Iran?	41
CONCLUSION	45
BIBLIOGRAPHY	53

INTRODUCTION

“Human error is a permanent and not a periodic factor in history, and future negotiators will be exposed, however noble their intentions, to futilities of intention and omission as grave as any which characterized the Council of Five. They were convinced that they would never commit the blunders and inequities of the Congress of Vienna. Future generations will be equally convinced that they will be immune from the defects which assailed the negotiators of Paris. Yet they in their own turn will be exposed to similar microbes of infection, to the internal inadequacy of human intelligence.”

- Harold Nicolson, *Peacemaking 1919*

There have been several pieces of research written since the early nineteen seventies, with some dating back to 1940, that address numerous aspects of the tumultuous relationship between the U.S. and Iran. These sources have come from primarily three countries: the U.S., Iran, and Great Britain. Several major “Think Tanks” such as the Heritage Foundation, The Brookings Institute, and The Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, have provided several sources that appear to provide helpful contrasting opinions. The key aspect of the research is the ability to track the past relationship stages and how different political leaders are able to influence the relations both negatively and positively. A most difficult goal to achieve is gathering data and opinions about how the potential new leaders of each country drive the relationship and in which direction. Lastly, the most relevant piece is experiencing real-time election results and the ensuing reactions throughout the world.

This chosen military field of study addresses multiple aspects of the relationship between America and Iran. This monograph addresses different aspects, eras, and

various implications to world security structures, specifically between Iran and the U.S. The majority of effort will be in the area of the political history in both countries, current conditions, and the potential for normalized relationships between the two countries. The model of a normalized relationship will be a snapshot of the relationship the United States and Iran relished during the Seventies. Though not a perfect relationship, it did represent a workable relationship for each country and potentially was a basis for peace in parts of the Middle East. This research addresses one specific area of interest, whether there are roadblocks or not in diplomacy that would prevent new personalities from establishing normal bilateral relationships.

In today's worldview of politics, there is no more greatly contested topic than peace in the Middle East. The term in itself is enormous and beyond the ability of this paper to define in agreeable logic. The basic geographic confines of the Middle East are simple to understand, however the definition of peace in the Middle East is vastly complex. According to the U.S. Department of State, the Middle East is comprised of the following countries: Egypt, Syria, Israel, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, and Qatar¹. This paper will tackle a very specific issue of peace and more specifically the major power brokers that are responsible for peace or aggression in the Middle East. It would be quite preposterous to attempt to prove in a limited medium

¹ U.S. Department of State. "Under Secretary for Political Affairs". Near Eastern Affairs. <http://www.state.gov/p/nea/ci/index.htm> (accessed Jan. 17, 2009).

such as this who the real power brokers are and how they each contribute to peace or aggression. This paper will address the implications of the recent presidential elections in the United States and the June presidential elections in Iran. This paper will not address the democratic process of elections, but the outcome of the U.S. election and the potential outcome of the Iran elections and the possible impacts they may have on peace and politics in the Middle East and throughout the world. The question to be ultimately opined upon is if there is any potential for peaceful negotiations or talks between the United States of America and Iran that could possibly lead to normalized relations.

Prior to looking at the elections, there will be a review of the history between the United States and Iran. This history will cover only the highlights and lowlights of the relationships, mostly based on key events over the last 30 years. These events and this history is what have set the current state of affairs between the two countries. The outcome of the elections will determine the positioning of each leader in his respective country, and the possibility of forming normalized relationships. The elected leaders will have their ability tested and must demonstrate their skill in bringing teams of diplomats together to achieve a normal, unilateral relationship; which should lead to normal multi-lateral relationships. The use of both unilateral and multi-lateral in the same sentence may seem intriguing or discontinuous, but as history has proved repeatedly, relationships in the world today require countries to be able to maintain both levels of relationships in order to preserve civility and peaceful existence.

The focus of this monograph will be the unilateral aspect of the rather tumultuous relationship between Iran and the United States. In writing about the Middle East, it is impossible to focus on strictly a unilateral basis alone since it influences the entire region

based on the success or failure of this relationship. There are several countries that one may not immediately consider when discussing Iranian policies and politics as seen through U.S. standards. One of the most important and oft overlooked relationships is Israel. Israel and Iran have long-standing hatred, just as many countries in the Middle East. In contrast, the United States and Israel are long standing partners on almost every aspect both politically and militarily. One must also consider the U.S. and Iraq relationship, which will not be a simple discussion.

The review of the historical impacts is neither a complete historical accounting of either countries history nor a complete recollection of the long relationship between Iran and the U.S. This depiction will be limited to major factors that have led to the current system frame between the U.S. and Iran on multiple fronts. This review will begin with a look at the overall view of power and policy in both countries. There is a section on Maslow that reviews the human needs that dictate desires and negotiations basis for both countries, assuming humans are humans regardless of borders. Following the discourse on Maslow, is a review of key dates in the histories. This includes major events that have formed the current views by inhabitants of both countries and other countries both east and west. The final section on the review of the history will be the events of the shoot down of the Iranian Airbus by the U.S. Navy in 1987. This event was not only catastrophic in nature, but also led to the final demise of any hope of a U.S. and Iran relationship for the near term.

Following the explanation of historical background, a complete review of the current political conditions on both countries will follow. This will include the results of the U.S. presidential elections, a race in which Barack Hussein Obama emerged

victorious. The variable aspect of this review will be that of the potential candidates in Iranian elections. For the purpose of this paper, the discussion will be limited to the top two candidates as of January 20th, 2009. This will direct a discussion and severely limit the number of potential political outcomes. This is a viable and acceptable approach since the two leading candidates represent the two most popular and powerful parties in Iran. This permits a “party-based” discussion where recent history and current actions allow for comparisons of potential approaches with the United States. The discussion on the current situation will begin with a review of the common military comparison of Diplomatic, Information, Military, and Economic (DIME) situations in both countries and how each impact the stability and view of the countries. The DIME section leads to the discussion previously alluded to concerning the current politics of each country. To close the current politics section a limited piece on terrorism attempts to tie the relevant pieces together to complete the picture currently seen in each country.

There are several directions in which to take Iranian relationship considerations with the United States. The largest aspect in most military planners view is that of the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Politicians may disagree, but the ability of Iran to launch a reliable nuclear weapon will influence all political discussions and relationships. This is not limited to simply U.S. based relationships, but throughout the Middle East. A large section of this paper will cover the aspect of nuclear weapons. To begin this section a quick review of critical pieces of the history of nuclear weapons is produced. This section is not meant as a complete history, but a very limited piece on the use and propensity of a country to use nuclear weapons. To complete the normal thought process a section discussing the possibility of Iran actually having the capability, obtaining the

capability, and then actually using nuclear weapons. Again, this section is based on both history and speculation of the Middle Eastern, Muslim mind and the potential to “pull the trigger”.

The conclusion of this paper presents additional editorial comments by the author. This approach deemed necessary due to this topic containing opinion based upon history, fact, and human interaction and desires. All of these ingredients led to a speculative piece that can be argued in an academic or operational setting with either side carrying enormous weight. The conclusion attempts to draw the main facts, assumptions, and thoughts to a logical conclusion that it is highly unlikely Iran and the United States will establish a normal relationship in the near future.

HISTORICAL IMPACTS

“There is no process by which the cross-hatched complexity of the acted history can be reproduced faithfully in the written word.”

- C.V. Wedgwood, History and Hope

Power and Policy

In order to discuss the true impact of historical events, the one must address the definition of “Super Power”. Professor of National Security Affairs at the Naval Postgraduate School, Alice Lyman Miller, defines a superpower as "a country that has the capacity to project dominating power and influence anywhere in the world, and sometimes, in more than one region of the globe at a time, and so may plausibly attain the status of global hegemon."² A judicious application of this definition is required throughout in order to present a very distinct view of how the remainder of the world, minus the Soviet Union and Great Britain, react to United States policy and actions. That

² Naval Postgraduate School, Alice Lyman miller, <http://www.nps.edu/academics/sigs/nsa/faculty/miller.html>. (accessed Dec. 12, 2008).

reaction is often times with complete disdain from the rest of the world. Others believe the United States does what it desires both militarily and politically, without consideration to the impacts on the rest of the world. A case in point is the massive outcry of support around the world for Barrack Obama during his run for President in late 2008. The world viewed candidate Obama at his word, a word of change and complete separation from the policies of the perceived evil of President Bush. It is critical that this stage be set appropriately and consistently when reviewing historical events. Regardless that the majority of historical events took place prior to George W. Bush taking office, the current state of mind throughout world is that the Bush-led U.S. was nothing more than a forced hegemon. As a quick review of Bush efforts, he did lead an initial air assault on Afghanistan in retaliation of the September 11th terror attack in New York and Washington, D.C. In addition, the Bush Administration led the U.S. and some of its allies to invade Iraq in early 2003. This invasion was in retaliation to the September 11th attacks and the search for weapons of mass destruction. As history played out, Iraq played only a limited role in developing terrorists that carried out the attacks against the U.S. homeland. Moreover, the majority of the free world believed that President Bush manufactured evidence of weapons of mass destruction and then forced the U.S. Congress and the rest of the remaining allies to go to war Iraq. By true definition, these

actions are of those of a hegemon, but definitely not forced actions upon any country or government. This fact will become critical, during the ensuing discussion on history as both the U.S. and Iran took actions to protect their own countries. They were not acting as a superpower or a hegemon. As Maslow stated in 1943 and still holds true today, “man is a perpetually wanting animal”³, and one can predict to a certain degree how countries and disparate individuals will react to certain revocation of liberties and life styles. A review of Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs, the tie between historical action and the perceived needs for these actions will lead to future actions, which tends to the fact that despite new leaders, there will not be normalized relationships between U.S. and Iran.

Maslow?

Maslow’s “Hierarchy of Needs” determines people’s zeal for a certain quality of life⁴. This paper will only address three aspects of Maslow’s hierarchy of needs; this is not to alter any original thought, but under the assumption that the inclusion of only three needs does not alter Maslow’s premises. This paper will only address an individuals’ need for social freedom, the need for physical security, and the need for financial stability. These are the three largest factors that a government or social order can

³ Maslow, Abraham, “Theory of Human Motivation”, *Psychomatic Medicine*, 1943, 85-92.

⁴ Maslow, Abraham, “Theory of Human Motivation”, *Psychomatic Medicine*, 1943, 85-92

influence directly. The definition of Social Freedom is “the ability to live one’s life without the fear of reprisal based on race, creed, gender, or political affiliation.”⁵ Physical Security is defined as “the ability to live your life in the manner you choose without the threat of bodily harm to yourself or others of your concern.”⁶ Financial stability is “the ability to earn, invest, and spend as you desire with a certain logical rate of return, interest, and growth without major unforeseen changes.”⁷ Highlighting the three Maslowian needs is necessary because there are directly impacted by military and law enforcement agencies, political systems, and worldwide financial systems.⁸ The understanding and acceptance of these needs allows for a review of the following historical events under the light of a common source attempting removal of any emotional and subjective analysis prior to the completion of the purely historical reviews. This review of historical events only portrays the U.S. and Iranian interest in each of the events. This section will also only discuss events that were pertinent to the changes in the relation between U.S. and Iran. Most view these events as failures of some sort in the diplomatic description of relationships. The design of this section is not to cover the actual event, but highlight the impact to the relationship between U.S. and Iran.

⁵ Maslow, Abraham, “Theory of Human Motivation”, *Psychomatic Medicine*, 1943, 85-92

⁶ Maslow, Abraham, “Theory of Human Motivation”, *Psychomatic Medicine*, 1943, 85-92

⁷ Maslow, Abraham, “Theory of Human Motivation”, *Psychomatic Medicine*, 1943, 85-92

⁸ Maslow, Abraham H, *Toward a Psychology of Being*, (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1968), 165, 186.

The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly

The starting point for the historical review will be Aug. 19th, 1953. This day was the beginning of a joint U.S. and British Coup in Iran to overthrow the Prime minister. Known as The "28 Mordad" coup by its Persian date, this event was a watershed for Iran, the Middle East, and for the standing of the United States in the region. The joint U.S.-British operation ended Iran's drive to assert sovereign control over its own resources and helped put an end to a vibrant chapter in the history of the country's nationalist and democratic movements. These consequences resonated with dramatic effect in later years. When the Shah finally fell in 1979, memories of the U.S. intervention in 1953, which made possible the monarch's subsequent, and increasingly unpopular, 25-year reign, intensified the anti-American character of the revolution in the minds of many Iranians.⁹ One can argue that there are other critical dates of import, but August 1953, signifies one of the most widely accepted dates as the turning south for east and west congeniality. However, 1979 proved to be a very important year in terms of events that would form future relationships between the United States and Iran.

The Iranian Revolution in 1979 was the overthrow of Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi that produced the end of the Iran Monarchy. The leader of the revolutionary

⁹ Gasiorowski, Mark J.; Byrne, Malcolm , *Mohammad Mosaddeq and the 1953 Coup in Iran (Modern Intellectual and Political History of the Middle East)*, (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2004) 95.

forces was the U.S. sponsored Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini that brought in the new Islamic Republic. One author has commented that this revolution has “made Islamic fundamentalism a political force ... from Morocco to Malaysia.”¹⁰ After the overthrow, the Iranian public voted to approve the theocratic constitution and the appointment of the new Supreme Leader. Even though the U.S. had no clear policy concerning Iran¹¹, the Shah was given great regard in the U.S. President Carter gave unquestionable support to the Shah which led to the beginning of issues with Iran. One of the turning points in the situation regarding the relationships was President Carter allowing the treatment of the deposed Shah for cancer at the Mayo clinic. The lack of a policy and the overthrow set in motion a chain of events in the rest of 1979 that would be the ultimate end to the relationship between U.S. and Iran.

Another event occurring in 1979 became a centerpiece for the relationship. The Iran Hostage Crisis became one of the most infamous diplomatic crises between Iran and the United States. A group of Islamist students took over the American embassy in support of the Iranian revolution and took fifty-two U.S. diplomats and military personnel hostage. The Iranian government held these U.S. citizens for 444 days from November 4, 1979 to January 20, 1981, in Iran. In 1981, as Ronald Reagan assumed the office of

¹⁰ Nasr, Vali, *The Shia Revival-How conflict inside Islam will shape the future*, (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 2006), 121.

¹¹ Keddie, Nikki R., *Modern Iran: Roots and Results of Revolution*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003) 235.

President, many viewed the hostage taking as the straw that broke referral the camel's back. At this point normal relationships between U.S. and Iran were non-existent and hopeless for the future. Many also believe that the hostage situation was the single most important factor in Ronald Regan beating Jimmy Carter in his quest for re-election. It was popular belief at the time that with Carter out of office and a staunch Republican coming in, there was no chance for East-West relationships to improve or heal. A common belief at that time was that things between the U.S. and Iran could not get any worse.

Another critical event, commonly referred to as the Iran/Contra scandal or "Irangate", ultimately caused a larger chasm in U.S. and Iran relationships. With Irangate's design beginning in 1985¹², it took several years for all facts to become public and the full damage to be understood and felt throughout the world. In an attempt to improve U.S. and Iran relations, several people on President Reagan's National Security Team, designed a plan to sell weapons to Iran¹³. Iran was to use these weapons in the ongoing war between Iran and Iraq. Iran, as partial payment for the weapons, negotiated with Lebanon for the release of six U.S. citizens held as hostages in Lebanon by the Hezbollah. To culminate the deal, the U.S. would then divert the received weapons

¹² Gray, Collin S., *The Sheriff*, (Lexington: The University of Kentucky Press, 2004), 84.

¹³ Some speculate that this was not an attempt to further the relationship between Iran and the U.S., but a means for the U.S. to ensure their interest around the world were met, regardless of the cost and bedfellows it would involve.

payment to the Contras in Nicaragua. These anti-communist forces were engaged in heavy fighting in Nicaragua. Unfortunately, only in the terms of improved U.S. / Iran relationships, the deal fell apart at the seams and brought shame and disgrace upon the U.S. Government, the Israeli government¹⁴, and the Shah of Iran and his team.¹⁵

The Nail in the Coffin

One of the last events to cause the largest of gaps in the relationship between U.S. and Iran occurred in 1988. On Sunday, July 3rd, the USS Vincennes, a guided missile cruiser, shot down Iran Air Flight 655 shortly after takeoff from Bandar Abbas airport¹⁶¹⁷. The U.S. Navy warship Vincennes made an official statement that it identified the airbus as a hostile aircraft due to the increased state of readiness and threat information received by the Combat System on watch. Regardless of the facts surrounding the incident, Iran and the rest of the Middle East saw 290 dead bodies floating in the Persian Gulf. Despite the U.S. Navy's best efforts to mitigate the event by

¹⁴ The Israeli government acted as a mediator in the deal and although attempting to keep their part quiet, it became public after the terms were released.

¹⁵ Cave, George, Washington Report on Middle East Affairs, 1994
<http://www.wrmea.com/backissues/0994/9409008.htm> (accessed Dec. 12, 2008).

¹⁶ During this timeframe, the U.S. had a large contingent of ships in the Middle East taking part of Operation Earnest Will. The U.S. warships were protecting Kuwaiti Oil tankers that were being attacked by Iranian gunboats.

¹⁷ Stephen Andrew Kelley (June 2007), *Better Lucky Than Good: Operation Earnest Will as Gunboat Diplomacy*, Naval Postgraduate School,
<http://www.ccc.nps.navy.mil/research/theses/kelley07.pdf>, (accessed November 11, 2007).

responding to the tragic scene, it was more than the populace of Iran and the Middle East could stomach of American might and posturing.

These events have demonstrated good and bad efforts and circumstances on behalf of each country. However, as any logical person can deduce, based on these historical events alone, it would be difficult for any political party or team of politicians and diplomats to overcome the history of animosity between the two countries. George W. Bush found himself in an awesome position of responsibility after the terror attacks of September 11th, 2001. These attacks set his course towards protecting American citizens at all costs. These measures, no matter how effective, cost the United States great political capital around the globe due to the stern stance taken. This was evident in the war between Iran and Iraq mentioned earlier in conjunction with the Iran-Contra scandal. Iran's part in the war was costly and America despite its efforts was not effective in changing the view of most Iranians. This anti-American view has only become stronger and more entrenched in the average Iranian mind¹⁸. In contrast, a majority of Americans are not perceptive enough to separate the difference between the Al-Qaeda Network members that carried out the attacks on America and the rest of the Middle East. This

¹⁸ Patrick Clawson, "The Paradox of the Anti-American in Iran", *Journal of Middle East Review of International Affairs*, Volume 8, No. 1. Currently there are many Anti-American demonstrations held in Iran.

mindset does not allow a rapid changing environment to exist in either country despite changes in political parties.

CURRENT POLITICS AND CULTURE

“We stand face to face with terrible question of evil and do not even know what is before us, let alone what to pit against it.”

- Carl Jung

Based on the history just presented, is there any possibility for a renewed or improved relationship between the leaders and governments of the United States and Iran after the elections in both countries? The popular opinion is that newly elected U.S. President has the requisite attitude to improve the relationship. This baseless opinion is not fact, just the mantra during the election process and his inaugural address, which promises fair treatment to everyone that treats the U.S. fairly.

We will not apologize for our way of life, nor will we waver in its defense. And for those who seek to advance their aims by inducing terror and slaughtering innocents, we say to you now that our spirit is stronger and cannot be broken -- you cannot outlast us, and we will defeat you.

For we know that our patchwork heritage is a strength, not a weakness. We are a nation of Christians and Muslims, Jews and Hindus, and non-believers. We are shaped by every language and culture, drawn from every end of this Earth; and because we have tasted the bitter swill of civil war and segregation, and emerged from that dark chapter stronger and more united, we cannot help but believe that the old hatreds shall someday pass; that the lines of tribe shall soon dissolve; that as the world grows smaller, our common humanity shall reveal itself; and that America must play its role in ushering in a new era of peace.

To the Muslim world, we seek a new way forward, based on mutual interest and mutual respect. To those leaders around the globe who seek to sow conflict, or blame their society's ills on the West, know that your people will judge you on what you can build, not what you destroy.

To those who cling to power through corruption and deceit and the silencing of dissent, know that you are on the wrong side of history, but that we will extend a hand if you are willing to unclench your fist.

- Inaugural Address, President Barack Hussein Obama, Jan 22, 2009¹⁹

This paper attempts to determine if it is possible to develop diplomacy, based on cultural and or social differences, between the leaders of the U.S. and Iran based on the election results.

In order to discuss the difference in the two countries as a baseline for attempting to predict future behaviors, one must understand the basic facts about the countries²⁰. The country facts offered for comparison are population, military, and economy, a basic correlation to the classic military Diplomatic, Information, Military, and Economic (DIME) structure.

D.I.M.E

The following table displays a graphic depiction of further comparisons on specific measurements that can more aptly capture the health and well-being of a country. The author has chosen to compare population, unemployment, poverty, and import and export of oil. These specific comparisons can provide a glimpse into the similarities and divergences of the two cultures. The following table depicts these crucial demographics.

¹⁹ Obama, Barack Hussein, Inaugural Speech, Washington, DC, Jan. 20, 2009.

²⁰ C.I.A. Fact Book, http://www.indexmundi.com/Iran/demographics_profile.html (accessed Dec. 12, 2008).

	United States	Iran
Population	303,824,640	65,875,224
Unemployment	7.2%	12.5%
% population below poverty	12%	18%
Import partners	China-16.9% Canada-15.7% Mexico-10.6% Japan-7.4% Germany-4.8%	China-14.2% Germany-9.6% UAE-9.1% South Korea-6.3% Russia-5.7% Italy-5%
Military Expenditures	4.06% of GDP	2.5% of GDP
Gross Domestic Product	\$14.58 Trillion	\$859.7 Billion
Oil – production	8.457 million bbl/day	4.7 million bbl/day
Oil – consumption	20.68 million bbl/day	1.6 million bbl/day
Oil – exports	1.165 million bbl/day	2.8 million bbl/day
Oil – imports	13.71 million bbl/day	210,000 bbl/day
Oil - proved reserves	20.97 billion bbl	138.4 billion bbl

Several glaring differences present themselves immediately. First, the U.S. has a population approximately five times greater than Iran. In that population, unemployment is significantly higher in Iran. This is quickly becoming a large concern in Iran and could lead to a large amount of pressure placed on whoever is elected President. Officials claim that the Iranian unemployment could become the single most critical aspect in Iran politics.²¹ Also, recently the U.S. unemployment ratio has been rising in view of the current economic stresses. In comparing Gross Domestic Product (GDP), the U.S. has a

²¹ Amuzegar, Jahangir, Iranian Unemployment Crisis, *Middle East Economic Survey*, VOL. XLVII, No 41, October 11, 2004.

GDP of \$14.58 Trillion and Iran has a GDP of \$859.7 Billion. This is a significant difference in pure purchasing power and ability to generate capital. The future section on nuclear proliferation discusses the significance of GDP further. The last two facts to discuss are oil production and consumption, and Iran's major import partners, China and Russia. Surprisingly, the United States produces more oil than Iran. Unfortunately, the balance goes out of kilter very quickly when one compares consumption rates. Due to the population of the U.S. alone, however, it consumes twenty times as much oil as Iran. This leads to an imbalance of import and export capability, thus creating dependency on other countries for oil supplies. This gives Iran a huge upper hand since its dependency is much lower. When comparing the major trading partners of the U.S. and Iran, Iran has great ties with China and Russia. Both of these trading partners need a strong U.S. economy; this provides Iran a rather strong upper hand in dealing with oil balance alone. One fact unrelated to this paper and covered in the media a great deal is the need for all Americans to attempt to reduce this dependency on oil. One last note on oil is that of comparing the strategic reserve. Iran has a strategic reserve almost seven times greater than the U.S. One cannot shy away from this statistic, especially when comparing the additive results of fewer imports and a lower population. Iran maintains a rather strong economic outlook when viewed in terms of the U.S. negotiating in a purely economic sense. In closing this economic section, one last bit of information is that the United States and Iran do not depend on each other for any major portion of their respective trade balance.

Elections

The United States elected a new President in November of 2007. President Barack Hussein Obama took office on January 20, 2008. The outgoing President, George Walker Bush, completed his second term under numerous shadows of failure with some calling for the filing of criminal charges for the outgoing President and members of his immediate staff. Despite no filing of charges to date, the new President appointed Attorney General, Eric Holder, promises to keep investigations going. These are important facts because it sets the stage for worldwide credibility. Bush left office with the Iraq monkey on his back. A Senate Intelligence Committee report stated that President Bush lied to the world when he shared the prospects and intelligence concerning weapons of mass destruction and the link to the Al Qaeda Terrorist Network that were believed both strong footholds in Iraq. As indicated earlier in the text, President Obama will do all he can to ensure that normalized relationships are established with as many Middle Eastern countries as possible. He has already made headway in announcing the closing of the prison in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba and in announcing the withdrawal of combat troops from Iraq. Obama has no record of accomplishment to compare empty campaign promises and announcements to a bona fide set of accomplishments. Add to that the Cabinet he is assembling and there is very little international experience. President Obama selected a two-term Congresswoman as Secretary of State, with no foreign policy experience. Another aspect requiring attention from the recent U.S. elections is the sheer volume of promised resolutions by the new President. President Obama has also pledged to take on several challenges. President Obama has promised to fix the economic crisis he inherited from President Bush, reform

health care, fix education, and win all the wars which currently embattle the U.S., more than just the War on Terror. This is a large load for any person, let alone the leader of the free world. There has been a great deal of speculation that this is too large for the new president and his staff. With a projected workload of this magnitude, how does any logical person predict an overwhelming revamping of peace with one of the most powerful players in the Middle East? It simply will not be easy from the United States perspective, especially when the war in Afghanistan will be looming large on Iran's eastern border. From previous experience, Iran will know that it is a small step for the U.S. military to take a detour and end up in Iran's backyard. The forming of the new Obama team lacks of strength in a team that is not focused on foreign affairs or international collaborating to any extent. The combination of these facts and efforts will send a mixed signal to the Iranian populace as they head to the polls in June.

The Iranian public has an opportunity to display their intellect if they elect the candidate who is more likely to build a bridge in which to grow the relationship with the United States. There are several political parties in the Iranian political process defined by strict religious roots or a desire for a more liberal, western, ideology. The two main political parties come from a grouping of the numerous parties. Most Iranians have very different approaches and vote along party lines. The incumbent candidate, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, is very well known by his anti-western hatred and desire for nuclear weapons. There are two other prominent reformists in the Presidential race set for a June 12th election. One of the Reformist candidates that pulled out of the race is the Former President Mohammad Khatami. This leaves former Prime Minister Mir-Hossein Mousavi, a former hard-liner, whom Khatami has said has a better chance of siphoning

conservatives' votes. Since Khatami pulled out of the race, the public view is now showing Mousavi as the leading reformist candidate. The other reformist candidate in the race, former parliament speaker Mahdi Karroubi, has repeatedly said he will not drop out regardless. Reports list Karroubi's chances as dwindling in this long political race in a country with a long political memory. The current President, Ahmadinejad, has labeled himself a Reformer, but he is specifically a member of the Alliance of Builders of Islamic Iran, and he still maintains a strong following of voters and many party members. The race is a match of some long-standing traditional Islamic beliefs and values for some of the hard-line beliefs of anti-western and pro capital mantra that has served the country well over the last several years.

There are numerous political parties in Iran, but for the purposes of this paper only the two leading parties and candidates are covered. A simple description of the two parties would be "Conservatives" and "Reformists". As the names imply, the conservatives tend to keep towards traditional Islamic views and press for continuance of the Islamic way of life. The reformists, tend to want Iran to become more west like, but still maintain basic Islamic ways of life. One of the most interesting facts is that the current president, who is the top candidate in the race, was once asked about homosexuality in Iran. His answer was simply that there is no homosexuality in his country. While the streets of Tehran still see the hanging of homosexuals in public, Iran has one of the most progressive sex change industries in the world. Iran does not require a "Time in character" nor does it require any predetermined waiting period. If a sex change operation is requested a simple physiological exam is required, and if the doctor believes the soon to be transgender is honest, then an operation can be conducted

immediately. Why is this important to politics and international peace? Simply put, Iran does not even know for what it stands. These mistruths and rapidly developing social distortions demonstrate that the country does not have an equally accepted standard. Ahmadinejad wants to proclaim the state is a country that is a holy Islamic country. Unfortunately, he has warped the laws to make the beliefs only a glossy false bearing of the true practices.

One major issue that divides the country and is important for future relationships is the view on Israel. This is important because both countries, U.S. and Iran, have or had, very differing views. President Bush stated from his days in running for office that Israel has a very special spot at the international table and will always be a most favored and protected nation in the U.S.'s eyes. On the other hand, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the current president of Iran, has stated several times publicly that the "nation of Israel should be wiped off the face of the earth." Depending on the approach and status that President Obama provides or maintains with Israel, this could be the single most important factor in a new relationship.

With mention of the political parties earlier, there was no mention of democracy. Even though the Iranians conduct elections, the high office in the country is the Supreme Leader. He actually "certifies" or approves the results of the election. The Supreme Leader has can disallow the results, but this power has not been invoked in recent history. The Supreme Leader's office is one of more religious import than that of political. He is there to maintain a certain degree of "Church-State" matrimony, just the opposite of the U.S.'s Church-State separation. The Supreme Leader's job is to ensure that Islamic law does not become too distorted based on politics, economy, or westernizing of the country.

Despite the attitude and direction of the Supreme Leader, the country still supports a democratic government that allows free elections. It is interesting that each party maintains its own direction and set of prerogatives that may not completely coincide with that of the Supreme Leader. The inherent power of the Supreme Leader, and the fact that he will not leave power until death, leads one back to the original thought: If Ahmadinejad wins then nothing will change in Iran. If Karroubi wins, Obama's rhetoric may possibly make inroads in establishing relationships.

A few closing notes on the political landscape in Iran. Despite all forecasting of potential outcomes, there is no potential for any type of bilateral approach. The Middle East is too complex of a problem for anything short of several multi-lateral agreements to be required for any relationships. These multi-lateral agreements will have to include Iraq, Israel, Palestine, Russia, and China due to the sheer volume of business and existing agreements and accords. One driving factor is the desire and current attempts of Israel to work with and join the European Union. This would naturally lend more credibility and international recognition of Israel. Along with efforts in joining the European Union, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is closely monitoring all activity related towards both Afghanistan and Iran. With the addition of possible oversight by these two somewhat powerful bodies, it could inhibit Iranian activity that is deemed inhumane. This is highly doubtful when one adds the complete snubbing of the International Atomic Energy Agency by Iran in all regards.

The final comment concerning other international opinions on Iran comes from the German Prime Minister in a public speech. The German Prime Minister, Angela Merkel, made a speech in Israel, where she made a promise to all Jewish people around

the world, that she would ensure that Germany remains “Israel’s best friend”. This is a very powerful statement taken to heart and crucial to the safe existence of Israel compared to the hate speeches towards Israel from Iran. The German Prime Minister promises to offer some level of protection; which inherently includes the U.S. military because of the same promises made to Israel. However, the U.S. will be limited in providing military forces to protect Israel due to the heavy and ever increasing commitment in Afghanistan. As many have seen in the past, the ability to pose military power in negotiations and posturing will be limited by both the United States and Iran with the aforementioned limitations. This in itself may lend to the discovery of limited relationships, but history dictates that the level would be low. Even addressing the big military posturing and a structure for normalized relationships and international force applied, one threat remains.

Terrorism

The common interpretation of the word terrorism has roots back to the earliest day of humankind. The definition and use of terrorism for the purpose of this paper is the systematic use of terror especially as a means of coercion in forcing ones view or opinion, according to Merriam-Webster. The full understanding of terrorism is critical to this paper because it is rampant in the Middle East and is used by state and non-state actors to influence thoughts and actions of western societies. To most Americans this is a ludicrous thought because Americans think differently than Islamic believers. Islamists believe in terror as a right for forcing their natural heritage and a method of manipulating the world. The most common type of terrorism is Trans-National Terrorism. Trans-National Terrorism is any terroristic acts that extend beyond national boundaries. As

demonstrated by the terror attacks of September 11th, the evidence pointed beyond the borders of the United States as the origin of the terrorists. One must give thought precedence to the sheer violence and apparent random nature of terrorism and how Iran and other radical Muslims may employ terrorism. This type of application completely dismisses terrorism as anything more than what it is, a violent means to threaten and motivate people to the terrorists' desires. Some people in this world view terrorism as a necessary part of the political process. Fortunately, most Americans do not share these thoughts. However, much of the Middle East, especially the radical Muslims in Iran and Iraq, grew up believing terrorism is a method to an ends. It is important to include discussion on terrorism because of the dichotomy of the two thought processes is a natural chasm between the countries. In practical application, if an Iranian believes that terrorism can manipulate any aspect of the democratic process, it will develop instant strains and rifts in any developing relationships. This presents another reason why normalized relationships between the U.S. and Iran will not be possible. To make relationship building possible, one would have to guarantee no terror attacks linked in any manner to Iran or its leading factions.

One avenue of approach for ensuring terrorism does not influence relationship building is to eradicate or reduce terrorists' ability to implement an attack. A label for one ineffective, but still popular method is "giving the suicide terrorist a reason to live," cute, cunning, easy to understand, but still completely ineffective by all applications. Another aspect to review is that the United States is the only country that is actively combating terrorism as a means of military might. Countries such as the United Kingdom, Germany, Belgium, and organization like NATO and the European Union,

view anti/counter terrorism efforts as Police action and not a military matter. One predominate view is that they will fight and defeat terrorism on their home soil, so therefore it is a Police action. The United States is taking the fight to the terrorist on their home turf and not allowing it to enter the United States proper. This battle right now will not allow the U.S. to reach out and touch Iran due to the stretched forces at present. The current fights in Iraq and Afghanistan are consuming the majority of resources the U.S. military has to offer. These two fights are making the availability of fighters so scarce that even recruiting and training of the forces has suffered significantly. If the U.S. military efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan were to cease immediately, the available forces would not be able to shift focus instantaneously towards Iran. This leaves a very limited United States to fend for itself in trying to ease terroristic threats from Iran just to improve relationships. With multiple priorities and two major battles underway, this does not provide great motivation for engaging the U.S. military against Iranian terrorist.

Some argue, however, that there is no terrorism threat in Iran since they have been relatively inactive in taking claim for terror attacks. However, Iran has been very active in aspects of terrorism. This activity ranges from planning and funding to conducting attacks via Hamas and Hezbollah in the Gaza Strip as recent as January of 2009, and the Golan Heights. In addition, the Iranian government has been funneling millions of dollars worth of aid to the Hezbollah and the Al Qaeda Terror Network. If there is any

question as to the design of Iranian-based terror attempts, a quick recap of Iranian terror events is captured by Lt.-Gen. (ret.) Yaalon²². According to General Yaalon, “Since 1982, Iran and Syria have each used Hezbollah as terrorist means of striking at Western regional interests, is to both achieve specific strategic objectives and to continuously demonstrate the truth of one of the Islamist central beliefs – the weakness of Western States^{23 24}. Regardless of the direct accountability of terror attacks, Iran is very active in supporting the training and implementation of terrorists and terror activities around the globe. One last fact to consider when discussing Iranian sponsored terrorism using Hezbollah is that the “Hezbollah benefits from its status as a de facto state actor, without being burdened by a commensurate responsibility and accountability to the international system.”²⁵ This makes the previous point of a thin U.S. counter-terrorism mission even more critical with the amount of terror activity emanating from Iran²⁶.

²² Yaalon, Lt.-Gen. (ret.) Moshe, “The Second Lebanon War: From Territory to Ideology”, (Monograph, Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, 2008), 32.

²³ Yaalon, Lt.-Gen. (ret.) Moshe, “The Second Lebanon War: From Territory to Ideology”, (Monograph, Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, 2008), 28.

²⁴ Yaalon, Lt.-Gen. (ret.) Moshe, “The Second Lebanon War: From Territory to Ideology”, (Monograph, Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, 2008), 45.

²⁵ Yaalon, Lt.-Gen. (ret.) Moshe, “The Second Lebanon War: From Territory to Ideology”, (Monograph, Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, 2008), 28.

²⁶ Hezbollah’s 1983 suicide attack that killed 241 Marines near Beirut is one example; so is Hezbollah’s 1984 torture and murder of Beirut CIA Station Chief William Buckley and the 1985 hijacking in Beirut of TWA Flight 847 and murder of U.S. Navy Diver Robert Stethem. The 1996 attack by Hezbollah’s Saudi Branch, Hizbullah al-Hajaz, which killed 19 U.S. Army (wrongly stated, mostly U.S. Air Force personnel, by still on point) personnel at Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia, is still another example of anti-American terrorism with its origins in Tehran.

The countries that are supporting the U.S. in the War on Terror believe that the U.S. could have taken quicker and more demonstrative quicker action in reacting to the 9/11 terror attacks. A contrary opinion is that launching the air strikes against Afghanistan on Oct. 6th, 2001, within thirty days after the attacks was plenty. As in past U.S. administrations, lobbing a few missiles at terror training camps was neither that effective nor demonstrative. However, as evidence showed months later, the initial attacks were effective in destroying numerous terror assets and locations. Other countries still argue that the U.S. could have done more and that the quest for hunting terrorists in Iraq was too limited and too delayed at an unknown target. A late attack and against a clearly definable target leads to the suggestion by liberal critics in the U.S. and abroad that similar U.S. action against Iran would not be effective. However, a similar argument can be held that the U.S. incursion into Iraq was baseless and illegal and that no terrorists responsible for the 9/11 attacks came from Iraq. This argument is still fresh in the international mind and a battle any new President is not going to be too eager to take on. Even if the U.S. and its international partners could neutralize the threat of terrorism, not just in a destructive sense, but a political sense, one large obstacle looms.

NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION

Its farewell to the drawing room's civilized cry,
The professor's sensible whereto and why,
The frock-coated diplomat's social aplomb,
Now matters are settled with gas and a bomb

- W. H. Auden, "Danse Macabre"

In the Word's of Senator John McCain, "Iran's continued pursuit of nuclear weapons poses an unacceptable danger that we cannot allow".²⁷ Senator McCain is not alone in this assessment. Dr. Bernard Lewis has noted that for Iran, Mutually Assured Destruction, M.A.D., is not a deterrent but an inducement that is part of the Ahmadinejad's messianic objective of bringing the "end of days", annihilating Israel, and reaching a nuclear showdown with the United States."²⁸ One area to research in-depth is how the Iranian perceived proliferation of nuclear weapons over the years and the U.S.'s

²⁷ ProCon.org, <http://2008election.procon.org/viewresource.asp?resourceID=1681>, (accessed December 16, 200).

²⁸ Yaalon, Lt.-Gen. (ret.) Moshe, "The Second Lebanon War: From Territory to Ideology", (Monograph, Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, 2008), 28.

lack of desire to partake in talks have hindered the overall peace and stability of both the U.S. and Middle East. What is nuclear proliferation? In the simplest of terms; nuclear proliferation is now used to describe the spread of nuclear weapons, fissile material, and weapons-applicable nuclear technology and information to nations which are not recognized as "nuclear weapon States" by the Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons, also known as the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty or NPT.²⁹ When contrasting the importance of which of the previous factors is more critical to forming relationships, no greater weight can be put on anything other than nuclear proliferation. It is true that all political elements mentioned previously the history and terrorism, are important, however, if one-country posses the threat of nuclear weapons, an unbalanced power is created through the region and world. That does not mean that the nuclear balance or unbalance is necessarily a limiting factor; but will influence political discussions. Without a history of positive and negative relationships, there can be no comparison or motivation for future relationship. However, the most commonly understood and aggressively sought after controlling factor is nuclear weapons. There is no question as to the capability of the United States nuclear arsenal. The U.S. is a nuclear weapon state. They have met all command and control requirements prescribed within the purview of the International Atomic Energy Agency, NATO, and even its own

²⁹ International Atomic Energy Commission, *Board of Governors' Report 2008*, Tehran, 3-6.

internal governmental controls. The United States has been a contributing partner with the Soviet Union in the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) that began in 1969. The design of the SALT was to limit and reduce the number and type of nuclear weapons held by the United States and Russia. The Talks conducted on a variable basis for many years and consisted of many variations in both participants and regularity. SALT I started in 1969 and SALT II continued through 1993. There were a myriad of treaties in the meantime including test ban treaties, nonproliferation treaties, Prevention of Nuclear War Agreement, and others. The slew of discussion occurred during the highlight of the Cold War, and America's ability to negotiate and treat Russia with respect was a great contributor to the success. However, the lack of trust in the Soviet Union was to return and punish all members of the talks. During all of the negotiations and treaty writing, the Soviets continued with aggressive behaviors that were in violation of most of the treaties. The Soviet Union continued to stock pile weapons which was contrary to the treaties. They also continued research and producing elements of the weapons that were strictly prohibited in the treaties they agreed with. These acts were a key reason that in 1993, the U.S. withdrew from the SALT II talks and not signing the final treaty. To this day, not a single country has agreed to nor signed the final treaty. The trust factor was always married with positive verifications. These interactions with the Soviets can also lead to preconceived notions in working with Iran, both in a positive and negative manner. With the lessons learned from the Soviet Union, the United States is now more capable of dealing in multiple layers of truths and can rely on verification. Unfortunately, for Iran, they will have to endure the doubts and continual questioning and verification from the U.S. One fact that also needs to be addressed is that Iran relies very heavily on Russia

and China for support in all areas of their nuclear program. Currently Russia is providing elements of the weapons that Iran cannot produce on their own. This includes different states of Uranium and new centrifuges that are critical for the production of enriched uranium.³⁰ China is shipping large quantities of Uranium in different states to Iran for the conversion to supposed power specific purposes.³¹

The History of Nuclear Weapons

A critical junction to take at this point is a review of the history of nuclear weapons. More specifically, a review is provided of the evolution of each country's ability to produce nuclear weapons or components that support nuclear weapons. Obviously, the United States has been openly involved in the production of nuclear weapons and their components for years. This fact is not kept secret; however, the exact number of warheads and capable launch platforms has never been released. The U.S. is the perpetrator of the only two known nuclear attacks in the world, those being the attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The first weapon known as little boy was dropped on Hiroshima on August 6th, 1945. The subsequent weapon, known as Fat Man, was

³⁰ International Atomic Energy Commission, *Board of Governors' Report 2008*, Tehran, 3-6.

³¹ *Ibid.*

dropped on Nagasaki on August 9th, 1945.³² The development, production, and employment of these weapons in Japan demonstrated how far America had advanced. The U.S. set the standard that all other countries have been chasing that standard since the inception.³³ At the start of the SALT I, talks it was believed that the Soviets outnumbered the U.S. in sheer warheads by almost two to one. As a condition of the talks, the Soviets were to reduce their number of warheads. Even though there were multiple site inspections, the Russians never reduced to the numbers agreed to. Long held as a truth, the Soviets asked other countries, Iran being one of them, to “hold” their weapons for them. Along with weapons in all states of readiness, it is also believed that Russia gave Iran components for enabling the Iranian nuclear power industry. From the nuclear power industry, it is possible to derive materials required for the manufacture of nuclear weapons. Mostly, the fissionable material is either a by-product of nuclear power that is required. Alternatively, some of the raw material needed to run a nuclear power plant can also be used in the manufacture of nuclear weapons.

³² There were 140,000 deaths in Hiroshima and 80,000 in Nagasaki. The Hiroshima bomb explosion had a resulting blast yield equivalent to 21 kilotons of TNT of 13 Kilotons. The Nagasaki bomb had a resulting explosion had a blast yield equivalent to 21 kilotons of TNT.

³³ As a side note, the Soviet Union made great strides in production of pure quantity of weapons. However, they never proved the reliability, telemetry quality, or yield of their weapons to the world like the U.S. However, the Soviet stockpile of nuclear weapons was quite immense.

Can Iran?

With much concern about Iran acquiring and building capable nuclear weapons, what is their current capability? There is much dispute and many conflicting sources of information as to the actual status of development programs and ability to produce the material needed for nuclear weapons. One of the best sources of insight that is based on years of close contact with the Iranians is the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs printing of the Monograph labeled “*Iran’s Race for Regional Supremacy, Strategic Implications for the Middle East.*” This source proved fact-based, is very well researched, and written by a combination of authors that have had a great deal of military experience with Iran. Despite being authored exclusively by Israelis, and mostly military officers, the bias was removed for the most part. The question oft asked in the international circle is what proof is there that Iran even has the capability to produce nuclear weapons? A most apropos question maybe why would Iran develop nuclear weapons? The answer is found in a quote by Lt.-Gen. (ret.) Moshe Yaalon, “Iran has accelerated its quest for regional supremacy is its mobilization of both Shiite and Sunni terror proxies, including Hezbollah in Lebanon, Shiite militias in Iraq and the Gulf, the Taliban in Afghanistan, and Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and the Al Aksa Martyrs’ Brigades in the Palestinian

territories.”³⁴ This is a clear indication that Iran has nothing short of regional supremacy on their plate. The goal of becoming and maintaining a regional power base makes the necessity of the threat of nuclear weapons even more crucial to their success. If Iran has the threat of nuclear weapons, the regional power base will shift because it will give Iran an upper hand in the ability to base negotiation power on their nuclear capability. With nuclear As Yaalon continues, “Perhaps the most vital component of Iran’s race for regional supremacy is the regime’s fast-developing nuclear weapons program, which has continued despite international diplomatic and economic antagonism.”³⁵

One quick discussion on Iran’s provoking the western world along with the disregard for sanctions is the military action it has taken recently. To make the point clear, Iran’s Revolutionary Guard Corp (IRGC) has been very busy in the last few years making western militaries very cautious of any operation, even outside of Iranian territory. The IRGC took 15 British Sailors hostage for fourteen days. In April of 2008, the IRGC conducted what is called a “swarming” raid on U.S. Naval ships steaming in the Gulf. The ships as well as the British Sailors were well clear of Iranian waters. Truly, this international incident went without as much as a hand slap to the Iranians. This would in turn empower them to take even more bold and aggressive action. These

³⁴ Yaalon, Lt.-Gen. (ret.) Moshe, “The Second Lebanon War: From Territory to Ideology”, (Monograph, Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, 2008), 28.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

signs clearly point to a country that is not content with the current international situation, especially with the Western countries.

The probability Iran of gaining nuclear weapons is predicted to be in the next ten to fifteen years. With Obama assuming office in 2009, he will serve one term until 2012. If he were lucky enough to get elected to a second term, this would have him in office until 2016. This is critical because Lt. Gen. Henry Obering, chief of the U.S. missile defense program, predicts that Iranian missiles could threaten the U.S. sometimes before 2015.³⁶

This prediction in itself should be raising the danger flags around the United States; however, there is hardly any mention of it from day to day. It is firmly believed that panic must not be raised by continually broadcasting a message of danger, but with little to no awareness. The United States is heading headlong down this non-revisable path.

President Obama has stated publicly that he desires to reduce the number of warheads in both the strategic reserve and the operational forces. This is an action that if started cannot be reversed because if efforts are being made to reduce warhead numbers, production will be reduced and cannot be modified quickly. The destruction of warheads indicates also a reduction in capacity to produce them. Once a warhead is destroyed, it is destroyed and replacement can only come from the manufacture of new units. As the President makes his way towards dictating not only economic policy, but also

³⁶ Fox News Website, Oct. 3rd, 2007, <http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,299189,00.html>, (accessed December 12, 2008)

international and military policy, certain amount of constitutional checks and balance must be completed. This would require a level of responsibility that this administration has appeared to bypass to this point. When the actions or beliefs of one leader are stated, so must the same be offered to the leader of Iran. According to Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khomeini and Iran's Syrian partners, "the Second Lebanon War was in fact a hostile probe of U.S. reflexes, as determined through Israel, a state that Iran and Syria consider to be a direct extension of American power in the Middle East."³⁷ This outright declaration of anti-American and Israeli politics gives credence to the supporting argument that Iran has and will continue to do anything necessary to disrupt or destroy Western activities.

How can Iran?

The next topic sets to discuss the exact status of Iran's nuclear weapon program. Any viable nuclear weapons program is comprised of three distinct capabilities: delivery system, fissile material, and weaponization. Without all three of these components, a nuclear weapon cannot be fired without certain telemetry and a strong likelihood of a controlled and predictable yield. A delivery system is simply the means to propel the warhead towards the intended target. Without a reliable weapons system, there is no

³⁷ Yaalon, Lt.-Gen. (ret.) Moshe, "The Second Lebanon War: From Territory to Ideology", (Monograph, Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, 2008), 32.

threat of a weapon hitting a distant target. However, being only one component, nuclear weapons can still be developed and employed without a delivery system. Iran currently possesses a delivery system; the Shahab 3 missile can carry a warhead of approximately 700 kilograms over a distance of 1,300-1,500 km.³⁸ It is also speculated in many news sources that Iran is developing a long-range missile that is capable of traveling a range of 3,500-5,000 km. That would enable reliable targeting of all Europe.

In respect to obtaining fissionable nuclear material for warhead production, it is believed that Iran has several efforts underway. Fissile material is any Fissile materials are composed of atoms that can be split by neutrons in a self-sustaining chain-reaction to release enormous amounts of energy. In nuclear reactors, the fission process is controlled and the energy is harnessed to produce electricity. In nuclear weapons, the fission energy is released all at once to produce a violent explosion.³⁹ There is a Uranium enrichment facility at Natanz being upgraded with faster centrifuges. There has been progress on nuclear reactor in Arak that supports plutonium production. In addition, there are continuous efforts to mine and produce uranium at Kuchin and Saghand.⁴⁰

³⁸ Farkesh, Maj.-Gen. (ret.) Aharon Zeevi, "Iranian Strategic Vulnerabilities: Implications for Policy Options to Halt the Iranian Nuclear Options", (Monograph, Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, 2008), 106.

³⁹ International Atomic Energy Commission, *Board of Governors' Report 2008*, Tehran, 3-6.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

The weaponization is the most difficult aspect of the nuclear weapon equation. As displayed Iran has the ability to launch a warhead, potentially to cover all of Europe, and they have the ability to produce sufficient fissile material to produce nuclear warheads, but can they weaponize the material? The answer is that no one is certain at this point. However, it has been proven that Iran continues to run simulations and experiments to test the use of the explosive material in warheads. Even though experimentation and simulations is not proof positive of a complete weapon system, it does indicate that the capability is not long from existing.

Would Iran?

Even if Iran had a nuclear weapons program, would they use it? Yes, is one of the assumptions of this paper, and a short answer based on the history and political situation presented thus far. Simply having and using a nuclear weapon is not crucial to forming a normative relationship between the U.S. and Iran. However, it is important for the Iranians to believe they are on equal footing with the U.S. as they approach the bargaining table. Iran needs to believe it is a regional power and can negotiate with confidence. According to the book, “Ground Truth” by Donnelly and Kagan, Iran’s pursuit of a nuclear weapon is to eliminate the danger of an American military strike.⁴¹

⁴¹ Thomas Donnelly and Fredrick W. Kagan, *The Ground Truth*, (Washington, American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 2008) 24.

Donnelly and Kagan also mention that there are other motivators for Iran to use nuclear weapons; the annihilation of the west. Donnelly and Kagan offer a more complete view when they mention that Iran's ancillary intent is "to induce the United States into ever higher levels of diplomatic engagement."⁴²

In closing the section on nuclear proliferation, one mention of an unresolved nature must be addressed. There has been much rhetoric bandied about by both sides of the table about unilateral disarmament. Unilateral disarmament means that both parties will relinquish all nuclear weapons. Not only disposing of the weapons themselves, but also destroying the stockpiles and the ability to manufacture future weapons. All political parties, regardless of country or particular beliefs, like to wave the flag of pacifism and that nuclear weapons are the most egregious form of warfare and weaponry available. Even so, behind closed doors all parties acknowledge nuclear weapons are needed not only as a deterrent, but also as a political bargaining chip. Therefore, the any talk of disarmament is ridiculous and only provided as rhetoric in political circles. If there remains any doubt based on the evidence presented thus far, answer one question; has the U.S. taken one-step beyond SALT II initiatives to reduce any numbers or capabilities. To add to the fact is the final statement from General Sharpira⁴³:

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ Dr. Shimon Sharpira is a founding member of the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs. He has written over seventy articles and books on Middle East Peace.

“Ironically it appears that for the Sunni Arab states, Israel, the United States, Britain, and the West, the Iranian threat represents a type of threat that bears certain similarities to the threat from Hitler’s Germany or the Soviet Union. In the case of Iran, however, an apocalyptically-minded willingness to accept mass destruction as part of what is viewed as a necessary showdown with the West increases the urgency of the present crisis over the two previous major threats to international disorder. Since Iran’s Second Islamic Revolution is a non-negotiable process, pursuing the diplomatic mirage with Tehran may well merely harden the regime’s belief that its enemies in the West lack the will to fight and are on the losing side of history. Such a conviction will likely hasten confrontation with the Iranian regime, not delay it.”⁴⁴

Dr, Sharpira’s comments comparing the U.S. view to Hitler’s Germany and the Soviet Union of the Cold War are telling. One must keep in mind that the comments come from an Israeli, valid; however, one must consider the bias that most intelligent Israelis must feel from the numerous outward declarations of hatred and destruction voiced from Iran. As a closing note, appendix a depicts the visual of the missile strike capability from Iran. The last shred of proof needed to demonstrate that Iran truly has Israel in its sights and fully understands the antagonism towards the west this demonstrates. Iranian missiles are capable of striking every major city and the entire land mass in Israel. Regardless of whether they are nuclear or not, the weapons will create havoc and lodge the beginning of a direct confrontation between Israel and Iran. This creates a very difficult situation for the U.S. because the U.S. has maintained a position

⁴⁴ Dr. Shimon Sharpira and Daniel Diker, Brig.-Gen. (ret.) “Iran’s Second Islamic Revolution: Its Challenge to the West”, (Monograph, Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, 2008), 56.

of protectionism over Israel. If Iran uses, nuclear weapons it changes the complete dynamics throughout the world. As mentioned earlier, it will be to complete the Islamic process of ending Western influence in Muslim countries and eliminating the Christian population in Muslim areas around the world. Notwithstanding a complete disintegration of any relationship, Iran may have at the time including Russia and China. Therefore, what real motivation does Iran have to come to the table with the U.S.?

CONCLUSION

Now the man who has risen to the top finds himself with new concerns, political and diplomatic. He is not simply directing the Army or Navy or Air Force. He is consulting with his colleagues and advising civilian superiors. ... He is advising them on matters having to do with goals and ends of peace and war. For this he has certainly not been trained.”

– Bernard Brodie, *War and Politics*

In this monograph, several different areas of research have been addressed. The majority of the research set out to prove that the probability of a normal relationship between U.S. and Iran is possible with the advent of new Presidential characters in each country. The summation throughout the paper is that it is not very likely based on the history, political landscape and culture, and the power of prospect of Iran developing nuclear weapons.

The historical review demonstrated that despite the years of mutually beneficial relationship between U.S. and Iran, it would be almost impossible to develop a similar relationship during the next several presidential years. The perceived power of the United States is both a boon and a hindrance to the process. The U.S. can use its hegemonic status for getting to the negotiation table, but it can present roadblocks when the other side does not see any progress. The power of the U.S. can also hamper the process as it has very dynamic and powerful positions with most of the international bodies and the policy making of those bodies. Even though the U.S. and Iran had a very

comfortable relationship prior to 1979, it turned ugly very quickly. The numerous events that tarred the reputation of both countries made it impossible to continue the relationship. Then in the 1980s, the relationship worsened with a series of events, some believed to be accidents, driving a huge wedge into the middle of the heart of all efforts. The potential for any relationship was dealt a sucking chest wound with the election of George W. Bush in 2000, as he was dealing with the terror attacks of September 11th and had no time for negotiations, especially with a country that was handing him unreasonable ultimatums. The U.S. was complicit in these events, i.e. The Iranian Airbus shoot down and Iran/Contra, as they were at the negligent hand of the military and a lack of respect towards Iran in the international arena.

The culture of the two countries has not changed drastically over the decades. The reason for this paper is that many people believe that “hope” will bring about a new era in peaceful coexistence. There could be nothing further from the truth. In addition, when speaking about further from the truth, with the religious roadblock in the middle of all negotiations and relationship, it represents a wall equal to the “Apartheid Wall” around the West Bank. The truth of the two religions is so far removed from each other and the followers of each are fanatical about the differences. While addressing cultures it is important to include the current state of affairs in each country. The measurement was based on comparing the Diplomatic, Information, Military, and Economic. In all of these areas, the United States has a distinct advantage in that it is more stable in these areas. There are differences and strengths and weaknesses of each country, but the overall advantage, the real power position goes to the U.S. Iran does not put much stock into this comparison due to the imbalance of the most important resource, oil. Iran produces less,

but both uses and imports less. Iran's strategic reserve of oil is exponentially larger than the U.S. Iran also has a lower consumption rate that is drastically less and they can grow reserves much more quickly than the U.S. This imbalance of oil resources and usage is vital to the stable relationship that Iran has with Russia and China.

The corner piece of this monograph starts with the upcoming elections and renewed hopes for new relationships. This is based on the new Presidents, however as the paper progressed it became apparent that the new Presidents will play a lesser role than initially garnered. If either of the players will have the upper hand in forming the relationship, President Obama has the greater chance. He has shown more of an ideology to negotiate and strip away the ugliness of the past. Furthermore, President Obama has no Supreme Leader to which he has to answer.

The final piece in addressing the culture of the countries is terrorism. Simply, in the U.S., it is abhorrent and a military matter. It has and will continue to be dealt with swiftly and justly with the goal to eradicate terrorism regardless of the cost. In the Middle East, terrorism is a way of life. It is a means to negotiations and expected in the political circles. More detrimental to Iran is that it has been proven beyond reproach that Iran sponsors terrorism directed specifically at the U.S. and its allies. The Hezbollah has been a terror puppet for Iran for centuries and Iran maintains several arms throughout the world. Sometimes the ties between certain terror acts and Iran are difficult to prove, but the U.S. must stay focused in determining root causes and never sit at the negotiation table while Iran is funding terror attacks against the U.S.

The last section of the paper on nuclear proliferation proves that the U.S. has nuclear weapons and Iran is working very hard at producing them. Nuclear weapons are

normally treated as a deterrent. The U.S. has treated them as such since 1945 when it used them against Japan. Some speculate that it takes actually having employed them or been a victim of them to understand the impact. The U.S. has a large active base of warheads and delivery systems, as well as a strategic stockpile that is the largest in the world. Furthermore, the U.S. also has a very stable and secure nuclear power generation program. Iran has no nuclear weapons that can be confirmed. Their zeal to get the weapons is stated to be deterrent factors just like the U.S. This is not fully believed, especially when statements are made about blowing Israel off the face of the earth. Iran is working on increasing their nuclear power generation capabilities, which will lead to fissile material for their warheads.

Iran has not been declared a “Nuclear State” and has many mandates on its nuclear power program. Many of these mandates it ignores. If the nuclear power production facilities continue to increase in capacity, Iran will have sufficient fissile material for a robust nuclear weapons program. Iran has already a delivery system for the warheads and is experimenting with weaponizing the nuclear material. Iran is only a step away and its entire nuclear program the center of much debate it is difficult to see that gap closing. This is especially true when Iran has said repeatedly that it will not abandon its nuclear program one iota.

The question to answer is; will the U.S. and Iran be able to change the current relationship between the two countries? There will be no change in the relationship between Iran and the United States. Despite a new President in the U.S. and whichever party wins the election in Iran, Iran’s history of hatred, politics, and sheer volume of public outcry against the West, will prevent the formation of normal relationships. This

includes both bi-lateral and unilateral relationships from forming. The author does not hold Iran completely responsible. The years of the Bush administration, with its hard-nosed approach to international politics has laid the groundwork for a new brand of hatred in a younger society that has recent memory. This hatred however should be tempered with the public denouncements of how the Bush administration ruined worldwide relationships and made the U.S. the whipping boy or shoe catcher of the world. Barak Obama has promised to develop strong international coalitions to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons. These were campaign promises and very verbal.

How does this really differ from George Bush's approach? In the same public statement, Barak Obama continues to say that the first measure should be sustained, direct, and aggressive diplomacy⁴⁵. Imagine Iran's confusion when these statements are read or translated. Is there that much confusion on the part of the new President or is it rhetoric of the past. It is understood that maybe the hope for peace by the Middle East is solely dependent on the fact that Obama's father was a Muslim from Kenya, a stronghold for radical Islam. That would necessitate the belief that the population of the Middle East is as uniformed as the populace of the United States that could elect an unproven Senator with no international affairs experience. One can only hope that it is not the case and that the Middle Easterners see promise in the new young President.

⁴⁵ Obama, Barack Hussein, "Renewing American Leadership", *Foreign Affairs*, (July/August 2007), 4-5.

However, the new President did promise \$50 million to jump-start controlled nuclear fuel bank and to update the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. Then in his next breath, the President-elect mentioned a bill to help the U.S. and its allies detect and stop the smuggling of weapons of mass destruction. The new President will need to decide which approach, a strong alliance with the known enemies, or building new devices to detect the smuggling. How can one in his right mind promote two diametrically opposed ideas? Not to pick on the President, but he is the wild card in this equation.

From previous arguments, it is quite clear that Iran has one goal and one goal only: the destruction of Israel and the West. This process does not call for coexisting with the U.S., Great Britain, Israel, or any other country with Western values. It unequivocally calls for the destruction of said countries and people. There is no mincing of words on anything that is written about this topic. Conversely, there are groups of people that believe Islam is a peaceful religion that can exist and prosper with Western partners. Unfortunately, this population is rather small and ironically, mostly located in Western cities already.

Another key indicator of the large chasm in Iran and U.S. relationships is the mincing of words. In a Reuter's article from January 9th, 2009, President Obama states that the U.S. would offer economic incentives to get Iran to stop its nuclear program. First, it clearly shows that Obama has no idea what motivates Iran which again indicates

a lack of internal experience. Secondly, Iran's response was that it is adamant to pursue its nuclear rights and does not need incentives from the U.S.⁴⁶ This type of disconnect so early in a presidency does not bode well for either party. Luckily, one can still hold his breath in hopes that the new President of Iran will have a more flexible mindset. To bolster that thought, the U.S. does not really have much in the way of expectations at all if Ahmadinejad is re-elected. In several public statements, Ahmadinejad has repeated that the U.S. must change and "change means giving up support for the ruthless, uncivilized, fabricated, murdering ... Zionists, and letting the Palestinian nation decide its own destiny. Change also means putting an end to U.S. military presence in (different parts of) the world."⁴⁷ These definitions of change do not sound like the typical starting points for negotiations. The challenging party in Iran has made several similar statements, but they do not appear in a media format as truly credible. They are, however, believable based on the religion and politics of the opposing party's leader. One must also take into account that the Supreme leader stays in power regardless of who wins the election. It comes down to the President of the United States, a novice in international affairs waging political war against a Supreme Leader in Iraq that has been

⁴⁶ Hashem, Kalantari, "Iran Tells Obama: Don't repeat false U.S. charges", Reuters' Limited, <http://www.reuters.com/article/topNews/idUSTRE50B24H20090112?feedType=RSS&feedName=topNews>, (accessed Jan. 12, 2009)

⁴⁷ The Huffington Post, Jan. 28, 2009, "Profound Change", <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2009/02/28/>, (accessed January 28, 2008)

in power for years, has great relationships with China and Russia and is ardent in his religious beliefs. For these reasons, an inexperienced President of the United States and an unwilling Iranian President and Supreme Leader, render the possibility of normalized relationships between the two countries as highly unlikely for the near future.

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Appendix A – Iran's Missile Capabilities

